

TUESDAY June 23, 2015

OLYMPIANS ALL OVER THE WORLD CELEBRATE OLYMPIC DAY



Olympians all over the world celebrate Olympic Day

OLYMPIC Day, held annually on June 23, is celebrated by millions of people in more than 160 countries to commemorate the birth of the modern Olympic Games, Olympic Day on June 23, 1894.

During this 120th anniversary today, National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and International Federations from across five continents will join Olympians to encourage young and old alike to get involved in sport, cultural and educational activities. The day emphasizes the place sport has in society and how sport can assist communities to foster social cohesion and tolerance in order to achieve goodwill. The three pillars of Olympic Day are move, learn and discover. Through these messages, sports organizations today are promoting the benefits of physical exercise, inspiring people to get active and enabling them to discover new sports while embracing the Olympic ideals regardless of ability or background.

Recently, the Aruban Olympic Committee together with IBISA, celebrated Olympic Day with a 1,2,3km Walk and Run for the primary schools and a 5km Fun, Run and Walk at Linear Park. Both events were very successful. Each participant received a free Olympic Day t-shirt and the winners received a medal.

Olympic Day events being held today with the support of Olympians include multi-sports demonstrations and schools around the country promote Olympic values and the children are encouraged to let sport change their lives.





Commercial developments between Colombia and Aruba

Dutch Ambassador in Colombia,
Mr. Robert van Embden



A F - T E R a successful commercial mission in Colombia, led by Aruban Minister of Economics Mr. Mike de Meza, this week is the turn for a Colombian delegation to come to Aruba for a 'follow-up' of the mission. This is what the Dutch Ambassador in Colombia, Mr. Robert van Embden informed the Prime Minister, Mr. Mike Eman during his visit

last week.

The visit of the Dutch Diplomat was to elaborate on expanding the political and economical relationship between Aruba and Colombia.

"The Colombian Market offers many opportunities to business in Aruba, but at the same time, there are interests in Colombian traders to do business in Aruba as well. Colombian traders of

different economic sectors in Colombia will be here for the follow up mission, which is very good development for our economy. The concept of making Aruba a 'hub' for businesses in the region is getting the attention of many Colombian investors. We realize that some Dutch businesses in Aruba already are doing business with Colombia via Aruba," expressed Mr. Embden.

T h e Dutch Embassy in Colombia is in constant contact with the Aruban Authorities. He explained that the Dutch Kingdom will soon eliminate visa for the Colombians. "We hope that with the elimination of visa, more Colombians would travel to Aruba be it as tourists or for business."

Memorandum of Understanding Between Aruba and the Dominican Republic

A T the end of this month, Aruba and the Dominican Republic will probably sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which is an important step in developing collaboration between the two countries. This was announced by the Minister of the Regional Integration of The Dominican Republic, Mr. Miguel Mejía, who was in Aruba to meet with the Prime Minister, Mr. Mike Eman. He was accompanied by the General Consul of the Dominican Republic in Aruba, Mrs. Joselyn Rosario de Nufiez and the Ambassador for Caricom, Mr. Juan Guiliani Cury.

"We came here to convey a message of our President to the Prime Minister of Aruba, Mr. Mike Eman to strengthen the bilateral ties between Aruba and the Dominican Republic," said Mr. Mejía.

Based on all the meetings that took place in Aruba, it is most likely that for the end of this month a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be

signed between the Dutch Islands and the Caribbean. After the MoU has been signed, the next level of negotiations will proceed to reach other bilateral agreements between the Dominican Republic and the islands, to encourage other bilateral cooperation.

The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Otmar Oduber has already started negotiations with the Dominican Republic by importing different products. This can go faster since Holland has recently signed a Maritime Agreement with this country which allows boats to make commercial trips between the countries.

"It will take 28 hours for the products to reach Aruba from the Dominican Republic since they do not have to go through the other countries and this is for a better price and quality." The products now can be purchased directly from the producers and be sent directly to Aruba," stated Mr. Oduber. The Minister considers this to be a

good development in the cooperation ties between the countries.

Another topic that was discussed during the meeting was green technology, specifically the experience that Aruba has acquired to produce gas from garbage, which is something that the Dominican Republic is also considering. He was very impressed with the advance in technology of Aruba.

"The experience that you have to produce drinking water from the sea is something that we can learn from since the Dominican Republic is considering to acquire this technology. The country still needs to be educated on this matter. The Government of the Dominican Republic is seeking diplomatic relations and support to improve the quality of life for the citizens, as is the case with the Government of Aruba," expressed Mr. Mejía.



Minister Paul Croes

UNICEF gives support to Aruba



MINISTER Drs. Paul Croes met on different occasions with the representatives of UNICEF to obtain and exchange ideas on the situation of children in different countries and of Aruba. In 2012, UNICEF concluded a study in Aruba and now, the counsellor of UNICEF, Mr. Niels Katsberg is on the island to offer support to Aruba and execute the integral plan for the youth of our country.

During this week, Mr. Niels Katsberg will meet with different Government Institutions, Government and non Government Departments, organizations, press, clergy and especially the youth.

In 2012, a comprehensive plan for the youth called 'Generation of Leaders' has been developed by different groups and institutions. Mr. Niels Katsberg will meet again with all these groups and organizations to advise them on how to execute this integral plan.

"We are very excited with the support we are receiving from UNICEF but at the end we all need to work together to put this plan into action. The central topic of these meetings is the Youth of Aruba and we are receiving the collaboration and support with no charge from the UNICEF. This is very important because not all countries receive this kind of support, but considering the developments of our Youth Policy and also that Aruba complies optimally to the Declaration of the Right of the Child, we are qualified to receive this support from UNICEF," declared the Minister of Youth, Mr. Paul Croes.



United States Consulate

U.S. Coast Guard Helps a Day Care and a Community Center on Bonaire

LAST Friday, members of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) Bear assisted in two community relations projects during their stay on Bonaire.

In coordination with the Bonaire government, 11 USCGC Bear crew members helped with painting and planted several fruit trees at KIBOS (Keyboss) Children activity center in Nikiboko and painted the outer wall off the Rincon Community Center in Rincon on Friday, June 19, 2015.

"It was an honor to have the opportunity to participate in this event and help out the Bonaire community. I'd like to thank the people of Bonaire for their warm hospitality and for sharing their beautiful island with us. Our special thanks go out to Mrs. Silvana Serfilia of the Bonaire government who organized the projects. I know everyone who participated had a blast and I'm excited to see the development of the trees and the community center in the coming years," ENS Aaron Davis said.



Infrastructure Improvements Propel Aruba's 2015 Tourist Arrivals

IN early 2015, Aruba's tourism stakeholders are succeeding in their aim to continue the country's strong 2014 visitor growth. Aruba hosted 294,411 land-based visitor arrivals in the first three months of 2015, according to Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) data, a robust 20.2% increase over the same period in 2014.

The higher 2015 totals follow the country's record 1.07 million visitors in 2014, which represented a 9.5% increase compared with 2013 according to Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) officials. The full-year 2014 increase far surpassed the 2.5 percent arrivals growth ATA officials had targeted.

Aruba's previous record for land-based overnight visitors was 979,256 in 2013, followed by 903,934 in 2012. Aruba's North American visitors increased by more than 7% in the first quarter of 2015; Canadian visitors increased by 8.2% over the same period.

Aruba's hotel sector also posted improved results in 2014. Average room occupancy increased by 1.7 percentage points, from 77.6% in 2013 to 79.3% last year. Average daily rate (ADR) increased 18%, while revenue per available room (RevPar) increased by 20.6%, surpassing the 9% increase ATA had targeted.

"Tourism objectives were surpassed on practically all fronts in 2014," said ATA officials in a statement. "Sustainability as an integral part of the direction of tourism was emphasized." In addition, ATA has finalized a tourism action plan designed to place "a greater emphasis on the development of the product Aruba," said Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, ATA's chief executive. Yet not all of Aruba's early 2015 visitor numbers have been positive. Cruise-ship arrivals in January and February of 2015 totaled 153,886 passengers, a steep 13.6% decline from the same period in 2014. Nevertheless, the country's tourism stakeholders are wagering that a series of infrastructure improvements and initiatives, including a program to encourage cruise ship guests to return for longer, land-based visits,

will generate long-term growth at sea as well as on land.

To that end Aruba has renovated and improved civic and tourist areas in downtown Oranjestad and across the island through its \$350 million "Bo Aruba" initiative, said Asjoe-Croes. The project included the launch of a downtown tram system, and the completion of a \$21 million seven-mile long Linear Park stretching from the airport to the Palm Beach resort region.

"We will continue to focus on effectiveness and efficiency and on the direction necessary for Aruba's market and its development of the product," Asjoe-Croes said.

The Aruba Airport Authority is also planning "multi-million dollar investments" in runway and terminal expansion at Aruba's Queen Beatrix International Airport to "accommodate increased passengers and help facilitate Aruba's role as a hub in the coming years," said officials. Queen Beatrix Airport accommodated more than 2.5 million passengers in 2014, an increase of more than 10% over 2013. "Continued growth is predicted this year in the number of flights and passengers that pass through the terminal," said officials.

The growth will include new flights from InselAir, which will launch two new weekly flights from its Aruba hub to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on July 1st. InselAir, which serves 21 destinations, is the largest airline operating from Aruba.

Also, all-inclusive resort operator AMResorts announced the launch of "Zoetry Isla Di Oro Aruba"; 126-room resort featuring overwater bungalow-style accommodations overlooking a secluded inlet in 2018.

"Aruba reached the one-millionth tourist mark in 2014 and saw a 3.7% increase in arrivals from U.S. travelers," said Alex Zozaya, chief executive of AMResorts parent Apple Leisure Group. "Now is the perfect time to enter the market and introduce our products and services to Aruba's booming tourism industry."

Bon Bini Festival Tuesday at Fort Zoutman



THE Bon Bini Festival takes place every Tuesday evening, rain or shine, doors open 6:30 pm and the show is from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Check out local food, drink, music, dancing, arts, and crafts. "Bon Bini" means "welcome" in Papiamentu, and that's the perfect word to describe the enthusiastic environment of this festival and the perfect introduction to the warmth and hospitality of Aruba's people. The Bon Bini festival showcases some of Aruba's most amazing artists. Steel drum musicians and dancers exude talent, and local artists and craftsmen show off their very best wares. Admission to this event is \$5 (USD); food and drink costs are separate, so make sure to budget for that, as well as for any purchases you may make!



Pitbull to perform in Aruba Summer Music Festival

ON Friday, June 26th and Saturday, June 27th 2015 Aruba will host the first "Aruba Summer Music Festival." During a press conference that was held recently Latin sensations Carlos Vives, Nicky Jam, Jerry Rivera and Elvis Crespo were announced as part of the line-up. Besides this great line-up the event organizers still had a surprise performer to announce. On Wednesday night organizers confirmed that the popular performer Pitbull has been added to the line-up.

Armando Christian Pérez better known by his [stage name](#) Pitbull, is an American artist from [Miami](#) with multiple hit-songs, awards and successful concert tours. Most recently he concluded an extensive tour in Asia. In 2014 Pitbull and Enrique Iglesias sold out multiple venues in the US.

The multi-day music festival on the beautiful island of Aruba will be hosted at The Harbor Arena which is a great location in the downtown area. The venue is completely paved which is ideal for dancing.

"For Aruba it is an honor to have Pitbull on our island as this will be the first time that he will be performing here. We are looking forward to an electrifying performance by our international visitors." Mrs. Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Groes, CEO of The Aruba Tourism Authority" mentioned during a press gathering.

The line-up for Friday, 26th June night will be Grammy award winner Carlos Vives, merengue giant Elvis Crespo and salsa legend Jerry Rivera. For Saturday, 27th June the attendees can expect an out-of-this-world performance by successful reggaeton artist Nicky Jam and the famous Pitbull.



"Divi Resorts Father's Day Celebration"

THE Human Resources Department of Divi, Tamarijn, Divi/Dutch Village, Divi Golf, Divi Aruba Phoenix, Phoenix Sales, Dal Time N.V. and Divi Aruba Sales Consultants N.V. celebrated Father's Day at the Eagle Bowling Palace. The afternoon was filled with good music, great raffle prizes and great bowling games.

Hernan Sanaofrom of Tamarijn was elected as Father of the Year and received a nice Cooler, a Tool BBQ, Cologne and a Dinner for two at Occidental Grand Aruba.

The Human Resources Department would like to congratulate all the Fathers of the Divi Resorts on their special day and hope that they enjoyed themselves at this wonderful event.



A little faith
will take you
to heaven,
Full faith will
bring heaven
to you

Journey of a Sathguru

Brahmrishi Shri Guruvanandji Swamy's (Shri Gurudev) spiritual journey began in his infancy under miraculous circumstances. Yogiraj Devraha Baba, one of the most esteemed saints of recent times, brought Shri Gurudev to his ashram to save his life from a terminal illness. Devraha Baba predicted that the young child one day would achieve the pinnacle of spirituality and he will use that divine energy to serve humanity.

Yogiraj's predictions have come true. Shri Gurudev has invoked all the Chakras (spiritual power centres) of his Kundalini (primal energy) and with 45 years of spiritual discipline (Sadhana) he has acquired all the Siddhis, the perfected spiritual powers of the ancient Vedic Sages.

Shri Gurudev is using the enormous divine energy that he has acquired, to help those in distress and to uplift the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the globe. He has travelled to over 172 countries to enrich people with the art of living a moral and spiritual life. Shri Gurudev's mission is to guide us to liberation from the cycle of birth and death while we fulfill our worldly duties.

Shri Gurudev holds numerous degrees including M.Tech. from IIT, PhD in Astrology and Masters in Sanskrit, Vedas, and Literature. He has participated in several international religious conferences, including the "All Religion World Conferences" where he has been honored with the "Best Personality" gold medal seven times.

Join Us For A Sacred Audience
With The Sathguru Whose
Blessings Can Change Both The
Direction And Destiny Of Your
Life.

Saturday, June 27th 2015
Blessings by Gurudev
7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Free Admission
Language: Hindi

Holiday INN
Las Palmas Ballroom
Palm Beach
Noord, Aruba

Sunday, June 28th 2015
Blessings by Gurudev
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Free Admission
Language: Hindi & English

Alhambra Mall
Alhambra Ballroom
J.E. Irausquin, Boulevard 47,
Oranjestad-Aruba

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Niki Shetty
+ 297 5947333

**Journey Of
Your Soul**
with The Divine Guru
Brahmrishi Shri Guruvanandji Swamy

Brahmrishi Shri Guruvanandji Swamy (Shri Gurudev)

Aruba Hi-Winds Tournament



THE 29th edition of Aruba Hi-Winds will be held from Tuesday, July 7 till Monday, July 13, 2015. But this year's Hi-Winds will have an early start for two events: the Mountain Bike Races and the Kite Freestyle competition are now scheduled on the first weekend of July 2015, July 4 and 5. All other events remain as scheduled, between Tuesday, July 7 and Monday July 13, 2015.

The Aruba Hi-Winds has been the biggest and best known water sport event of the Caribbean for a period of 29 years. Since 1987 the event has drawn the participation of international surf professionals such as Björn Dunckerbeck, Robby Naish and Anders Bringdal, which increased the global visibility of Aruba and acquired a lot of media-attention. Since 1996 the Aruba Hi-Winds has been held at the Fisherman's Hut. This spot is the best on the island for windsurfing and kite-surfing ensuring the international participants an awesome experience.

In the beginning the Aruba Hi-Winds was a professional sports event. In 1997 the Aruba Hi-Winds became an amateur status event. However, with the new change of government, the focus is to get the event professional

status once again; (they aim to boost the sportive image of Aruba). In 2002, kite surfing became

part of the Aruba Hi-Winds, which makes the event even more diverse. Also, the number of participants is still growing steady year after year. Last year there we had 180 participants, and the event draws the attention of around 2000 spectators. Besides the matches and races there are several bands, DJ's, food and drink stands and side-events on the beach.

Ever thought about racing in a tropical paradise? Race during the day and enjoy an incredible entertainment program with delicious dinners and enjoyable parties at night! It is the aim of the organizing committee to make the Aruba Hi-Winds within reach of as many sailors as possible from all economic backgrounds and from the various corners of the earth. Therefore, the organization has put together some very attractive deals on accommodation and registration fees.

Whether you're a traditional downwind slalom-racer, a fearless freestyler or if you've joined the newest craze in water sports: kite boarding, Aruba Hi-Winds is there for you!

The 29th edition of the Aruba Hi-Winds will start on Saturday, July 4th ending on Monday, July 13th, 2015.





BOSS Ning has been running a dog meat restaurant in this southern Chinese city since 1981 and she says business is thriving.

Her customers can feast on crispy dog or dog hot pot, as well as lamb, duck and other meats.

Dog is particularly popular in the region during the sweltering heat of summer and each June locals and visitors gather for a dog meat eating festival, which this year takes place Monday.

"Crispy dogs smell good and taste delicious," she says, declining to give her full name.

Her customers seem happy too:

"Dog meat is a delicacy. It's nourishing," says one man who gave his name as Huang.

But the festival, which sees some 10,000 dogs served up as meals, has become a battlefield in China's nascent animal rights movement.

Activists say many of the animals are stolen household pets that are then transported thousands of miles crammed into wire cages and denied food and water. Many arrive at their destination malnourished and diseased, before being slaughtered and served up to customers, they say.

Losing battle?

A new generation of Chinese animal lovers increasingly view dogs as companions. Of China's estimated 130 million dogs, at least 27 million are urban pets, according to research group Euromonitor. And there are signs that dog meat is losing its

popularity in some places.

Ten years ago, it was common to see dogs being killed for meat in Beijing's suburbs, says Peter Li, at the Humane Society International. Today, that is something that is rarely seen, he says.

And in Guangzhou, a city well-known for its exotic eating habits, a dog meat restaurant that had been in operation for 51 years recently closed.

This year, dozens of activists and their pet dogs have descended on Yulin. Some plan to hand in a petition to the local authorities demanding an end to the killing of dogs for food.

Others attempted to rescue the animals from the slaughter house. Hao Wei, an animal rights activist who'd traveled hundreds of miles from Xian in northwestern China, said he'd saved five dogs and two cats.

"We bought them at the place where the dogs are being killed," he said, adding that he'd spent up to \$32 on each animal.

"I hope the government would pay more attention to food safety. The dogs have skin disease and all kinds of other diseases but the butcher says it should be fine once they've been scorched."

The festival is also generating outrage internationally, with celebrities like Ricky Gervais calling for it to be stopped. The opposition to the dog meat trade is not

just

from outsiders. Xie Yanli

works in a local cafeteria and says she supports the animal rights activists.

"Most of the people who eat it are middle aged men. They eat dogs and drink beer," she said. "I don't eat dogs, I never did and won't do in the future."

Liu, a college student from the provincial capital Nanning, said it was his first time to visit the festival. He fears it might be shut down next year. "We just wanted to take a look and try things out."

Restaurant owners say the publicity the animal rights activists have brought to the city has, perversely, only been good for business.

"Originally, people from other provinces across the country didn't know about our dog meat delicacy but after our restaurant was shown on TV, they all come and try it out," says Ning, the restaurant owner.

And many in Yulin don't see what the fuss is about. "Eating dog meat is a regular thing for me. Dog rearing is the same as rearing pigs or chickens, there is no difference," said a man who gave his name as Zhong, who was enjoying dog hot pot with a friend.

A NEW MASS EXTINCTION could be underway, researchers say

SIXTY-five million years ago, the dinosaurs disappeared in what's known as the Earth's fifth mass extinction. Today, a sixth mass extinction could be well underway and humans are the likely culprit, according to new research published in Science Advances.

The past five mass extinctions on Earth were caused by large-scale natural disasters like meteors or enormous chains of volcanic eruptions, wiping out between half and 96% of all living species. But the modern mass extinction isn't being caused by a freak act of nature, the researchers say. It's being caused by man-made changes to the environment including deforestation, poaching, overfishing and global-warming, and it's proving to be just as deadly. Recently, species like the Emperor Rat, the Desert Rat Kangaroo, the Yangtze River Dolphin, the Skunk Frog and the Chinese Paddlefish, amongst hundreds of others, are believed to have become extinct.

About 477 vertebrate species have been lost since 1900, according to the research by Gerardo Ceballos, a senior ecological researcher at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and Anthony Barnosky, a biology professor at Berkeley.

If humans were not the primary source of these extinctions, there should've only been nine species going extinct

during the same time period.

Looking ahead

The researchers fear that 75% of the species we know today could be lost in just two generations' time.

"We have the potential for making massive change... and the bottom line is that we can't be the generation responsible for wiping out three-fourths of life forms on the Earth," says Barnosky.

Biodiversity provides critical functions, including the air in the atmosphere and purifying drinking water -- life as we know it depends on having high levels of species diversity, scientists say.

"People think nothing bad will come from species loss, because scientists can't predict exactly how many need to go extinct before the world collapses," says Ceballos. "The problem is that our environment is like a brick wall. It will hold if you pull individual bricks, but eventually it takes just one to make it suddenly fall apart."

While extinction is a natural function of life, this is the first time humans are being confronted with species loss at rates that are 1,000 to 10,000 times faster than what is considered the natural rate.

What you can do

The problem of extinction is becoming

very

serious, but it is not too late, says Barnosky.

"We have the potential of initiating a mass extinction episode which has been unparalleled for 65 million years," says Ceballos. "But I'm optimistic in the sense that humans react -- in the past we have made quantum leaps when we worked together to solve our problems."

Barnosky says there are a number of steps people can take:

-- Reduce your carbon footprint -- this is to hold back climate change from falling below critical levels and to prevent altered conditions which can ravage fragile ecosystems.

-- Never buy products made from threatened or endangered species --

this

includes items like ivory, animal furs and rhino horns.

-- Eat less meat -- 40% of the Earth is currently under cultivation, and if the lands used to feed livestock were used to grow crops for people, there would be 50 to 70% more calories available for humans to eat, which is enough to feed an additional billion people. It would eliminate the need to clear natural ecosystems like rainforests for farmland.

"Little by little people are understanding that we need to change," says Barnosky. "But whatever we decide to do in next 10 to 15 years will decide the future of biodiversity on Earth."



Millions of people bend and twist their bodies for International Yoga Day

INTERNATIONAL Yoga Day, June 21, was declared as the International Day of Yoga by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 2014.

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his UN Address suggested the date to be June 21, as the International Day of Yoga as it is the longest day of the year (Summer Solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and has special significance in many parts of the world.

Millions of yoga enthusiasts across the world bent and twisted their bodies in complex postures this weekend to mark the first International Yoga Day. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi spread his mat among rows of people, including his Cabinet members and foreign diplomats, at New Delhi's main thoroughfare, which

was transformed into a sprawling exercise ground. Thousands of people dressed in white sat on yoga mats under the Eiffel Tower, and similar events were held in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Beijing, Moscow and other places. Modi had lobbied the U.N. to declare June 21 as the first International Yoga Day.

"We are not only celebrating a day, but we are transforming the human mind to begin a new era of peace and harmony," Modi told participants. "This is a process for the benefit of mankind, for a tension-free world, to spread the message of harmony."

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed Yoga Day participants worldwide. He recalled that he tried his first Yoga asana - the tree pose - during a visit to India earlier this year and said the once he reg-

TALIBAN ATTACK

Afghan Parliament As Lawmakers Meet Inside



A WOMAN and a child were killed Monday when Taliban militants staged an attack near the Afghan parliament as lawmakers were about to vote on a new defense minister.

The militants detonated explosives and fired rockets near the parliamentary buildings in Kabul.

A large car bomb exploded near the outer wall of the compound, sending a thick plume of smoke into the sky. Six Taliban fighters then tried to storm inside, said police spokesman Ebadullah Karimi. Twenty-eight people also were injured in the attack.

Afghan security forces managed to fend off the attackers, who then moved into a nearby building, firing rockets and AK-47 machine guns. All six attackers were killed in the ensuing firefight, Karimi said.

Inside the parliament building, lawmakers were gathered in a meeting hall when the first explosion struck, Arif Rahmani, a member of parliament said.

The blast shattered glass and shook loose a thin layer of the ceiling that filled the hall with a cloud of dust,

he said.

The members of parliament had assembled for a general meeting at which Mohammad Masoom Stanikzai, the government's nominee for defense minister, was to be introduced in order to present his plans and policies ahead of a confidence vote.

All the lawmakers were evacuated from the parliament building unharmed, Karimi said.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said on his Twitter account that the militant group chose to target the parliament on the day the defense minister was to be introduced to lawmakers.

The U.N. mission in Afghanistan condemned the attack, calling it "a clear and deliberate affront to democracy in Afghanistan."

The U.S. Embassy issued a statement saying the assault showed "blatant disrespect for democracy and the rule of law."

Monday's assault is the latest in a string of high-profile attacks by insurgents in the Afghan capital.

Recent targets have included hotels housing foreigners, like the Park Palace Guest House, where more than a dozen people were killed last month.

More broadly, Afghan forces are grappling with a Taliban offensive across different parts of the country. American-led international troops pulled out of Afghanistan last year.

Stanikzai, the defense minister nominee, is the former chief executive of the Joint Secretariat of the Afghanistan High Peace Council, an organization tasked with pursuing peace talks with the Taliban and other insurgent groups in the country.

The introductions of nominees for Cabinet minister positions, particularly the defense minister, were held up for months by squabbling between the two leading Afghan presidential candidates, Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah.

A deal was eventually reached under which Ghani became President and Abdullah got the newly created position of chief executive.

his balance he "began to feel a certain peace of mind."

"My hope is that yoga will give people everywhere the sense and the oneness we need to work together to live in harmony and usher in a life of dignity for all," Ban said.

Schoolchildren, bureaucrats, homemakers, soldiers and ordinary folk took part in the exercise, held in all Indian state capitals. In Modi's home state of Gujarat, yoga events were organized at nearly 30,000 places, state officials said.

In Taipei, more than 2,000 participants rolled out mats and performed 108 rounds of the "sun salutation" - the sequence of poses often practiced at the beginning of a routine as the sun rises.

"They give themselves a piece of time to observe their

mind and their heart, which I think in the modern society we need a lot," said practitioner Angela Hsi. Many believe that yoga, the ancient form of exercise, is the best way to calm the mind and the best form of exercise for the body.

Indian officials said more than 35,000 people participated in the New Delhi event that was also an attempt to set a Guinness World Record for the largest single yoga class at a single venue. Guinness representatives said they hired more than 1,500 members of a global accounting firm to count participants.

India's Defense Ministry said that soldiers on the Siachen Glacier, the world's highest battleground in the Himalayas, and naval cadets on navy ships at sea also had participated in the Yoga Day events.



ESCAPED KILLERS'

DNA found in upstate New York cabin

DNA from New York prison escapees Richard Matt and David Sweat has been found inside a burglarized cabin in upstate New York, a law enforcement source has shared. The discovery has re-energized the two-week-old search for the convicted killers, who staged a movie script-worthy escape from Clinton Correctional Facility on June 6 and haven't been seen since -- at least not by authorities.

However, a witness on Saturday spotted someone running into the woods near a cabin in the Mountain View community, only 20 miles from the prison, according to acting Franklin County District Attorney Glenn MacNeill.

Investigators think the figure spotted Saturday could have been one of the fugitive prisoners, MacNeill said. Since then, law enforcement authorities have flooded the rural community, swooping in on helicopters, cruisers and all-terrain vehicles to scour the region for the men. More state and federal teams are to be redeployed on Monday, the law enforcement source stated. The break-in suggests the men "need provisions and are desperate," a law enforcement source briefed on the investigation.

There's no evidence the fugitives have the kind of support network they would need to get away from the prison after their plan to get a ride from prison tailor Joyce Mitchell fell apart, the source said.

Searchers are now working to contain the two men in the area, knowing they are running and on foot, the source said. Authorities also are concerned that Matt and Sweat may be monitoring radio communications,

the source said, without being specific on whether the men have radios or similar devices giving them the ability to monitor police communications.

Regardless, the sighting and DNA discovery explain the sudden shift in the search from an area near New York's border with Pennsylvania, some 260 miles to the southwest of the prison, where much of the weekend search had focused after somebody reported a possible sighting of the two fugitives. That search wrapped up late Sunday, New York State Police said.

MacNeill urged residents in Franklin County to be alert for potential danger during the search for the escaped killers, whom authorities described last week as posing a "significant threat to anyone who may come into contact with them."

"Be inside with the doors locked and very diligent," MacNeill warned residents. Matt and Sweat cut holes through steel cell walls, then shimmied along catwalks and through pipes before emerging from a manhole outside the prison gates and disappearing. Their escape set off a massive search for them and a probing investigation of employees and practices at the prison. Mitchell has been charged with aiding the escapees, and a corrections officer has been placed on paid leave, authorities have said.

Baker was left to sit alone in his home, with all his doors locked and a rifle in his lap.

On most wanted list



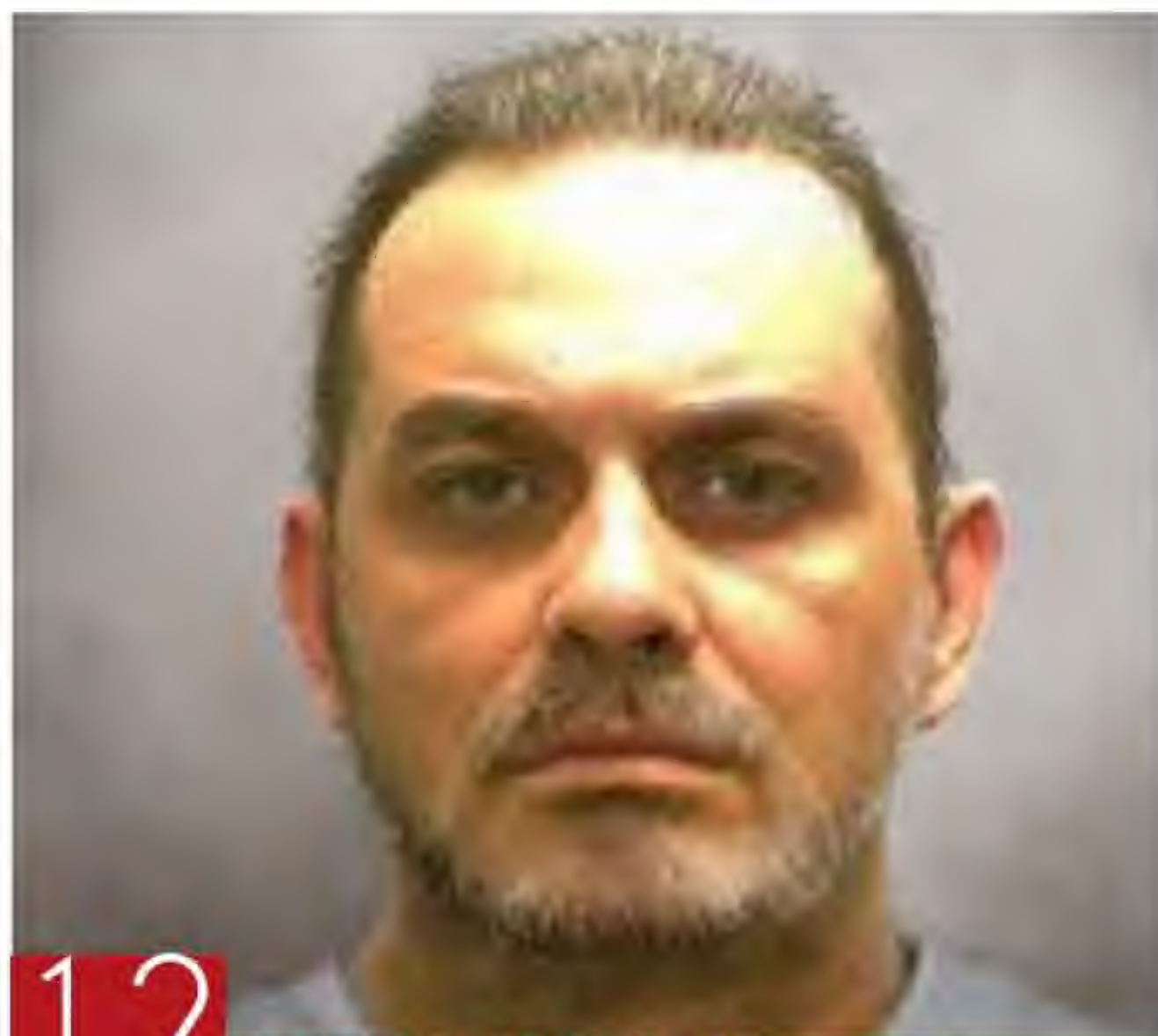
Franklin County

and Friendship aren't the only communities where police have swarmed in the hunt for Matt and Sweat. The manhunt, now in its 17th day, has primarily been focused in the area around Dannemora, where the prison is situated.

Described by authorities as «very dangerous,» the two killers have been added to the U.S. Marshals Service's list of its 15 most wanted fugitives. Reward money of \$75,000 has been offered for information leading to the capture of either man.

As many as 800 law enforcement officers have participated in the manhunt, which has cleared nearly 200 abandoned buildings, hundreds of occupied homes and more than 600 miles of rural trails, officials said.

State police have asked hunters and homeowners with surveillance cameras to check their footage all the way back to the day of the prison break for any unusual activity. The search has stretched to Canada and Mexico, with wanted posters of the escaped killers given out at both borders.



Iceland debuts WORLD'S LARGEST man-made ice cave



SEVERAL years ago, a team of Icelandic entrepreneurs dreamed of tourists not just exploring the surface of Iceland's glaciers, but actually getting inside of one.

Four years and \$2.5 million later, Iceland's first man-made ice cave has opened to visitors.

Located in the western part of Langjökull (Long Glacier), and 1,260 meters above sea level, the ice cave stretches deep underground giving visitors the chance to see ice that's been forming over centuries.

Stepping inside the cave is daunting at first. Visitors strap crampons onto their shoes to navigate the slippery and slushy floor.

Eyes need to adjust from the shocking bright white surface of the glacier to the dim LED-lit interior. Jagged cuts in the ice turn smooth and the colors of the ice change as visitors get deeper, changing from a cloudy white to shocking deep blues.

Information about the island's receding glaciers line several sections of the cave, along with benches to

sit and enjoy the tunnel. Visitors are treated to views of gaping crevices as they run their fingers along the walls of the tunnel.

'Ultimate wedding venue'

A special area in the cave, which developers named the "chapel," with blocks of LED-lit blocks of ice supporting wooden beams, will serve as venue for parties, weddings and concerts, says Sigurdur Skarphedinsson, managing director of Into the Glacier.

"Some might call it the ultimate wedding venue."

The ice cave, which consists of tunnels and caves that stretch 500 meters into solid glacial ice, is an awe-inspiring feat, and one that must be maintained.

"There are many challenges when it comes to building and taking care of an ice cave high up on an ice cap," says Skarphedinsson.

"The weather is probably the biggest factor. We are dealing with extreme weather up there. A typical day dur-

ing the winter involves clearing the entrance every day. There isn't any sign of an entrance after a snow storm."

It's easy to forget that there's ice in Iceland during the summer.

Each June, the tiny North Atlantic island with a population of 325,000 people transforms from a snowy white and rusty brown landscape to lush greens and vibrant yellows as grass, moss and plants awaken after a long and dark winter.

In fact, 11% of the country is covered in ice from several glaciers.

Langjökull, the second largest glacier on the island, was chosen due to its proximity to Reykjavik.

It's 130 kilometers to Husafell, the town where the tour begins, from Reykjavik.

"It's really accessible and there are not too many crevices in the area we chose," says Skarphedinsson. Indeed, crevices are a concern as fresh fallen snow can lightly cover huge gaps in the ice, which could damage vehicles.

Because of the danger, the trip to the cave is an experience in itself.

Cruise missile launcher

Guests board a 20-ton customized monster truck designed to traverse the soft, sloping snow and rocky ice of the glacier.

The truck seats up to 45 passengers, and was acquired from NATO, where it was originally used as a cruise missile launcher.

"I had to sign a contract saying that I would be the last owner of the vehicle," says Hermannsson. "NATO doesn't want it in just anyone's hands."

During the five-kilometer climb from the base camp, Hermannsson explains the impact of climate change on Iceland's glaciers along with the geology of the region.

The project managers ensure that the environmental impact of the ice cave is minimal.

"We've only removed 5,500 cubic meters of ice from a 900-square-kilometer glacier," says Skarphedinsson. "It's a bit like taking a drop of water from a bathtub." It's estimated that the ice cave could last 10-15 years without maintenance.

Obama Says U.S. **NOT** **CURED OF RACISM** **in First Presidential** **Podcast, Uses N-Word**

PRESIDENT Barack Obama used the n-word during an interview released Monday to make a point that there's still plenty of room for America to combat racism.

"Racism, we are not cured of it. And it's not just a matter of it not being polite to say nigger in public," Obama said in an interview for the podcast "WTF with Marc Maron."

"That's not the measure of whether racism still exists or not. It's not just a matter of overt discrimination. Societies don't, overnight, completely erase everything that happened 200 to 300 years prior."

The jarring comment comes as the nation is engaged in a debate over the role of race after a white supremacist killed nine African-Americans last week in a historically black church in Charleston. They also reflect a growing willingness for Obama to discuss race during the final years of his presidency.

Obama said there has been progress on race relations over the decades, citing his own experience as a young man who was born to a white mother and an African father.

"I always tell young people, in particular, do not say that nothing has changed when it comes to race in America, unless you've lived through being a black man in the 1950s or '60s or '70s. It is incontrovertible that race relations have improved significantly during my lifetime and yours," Obama said.

But he added that "the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, discrimination" exists in institutions and casts "a long shadow and that's still part of our DNA that's passed on."

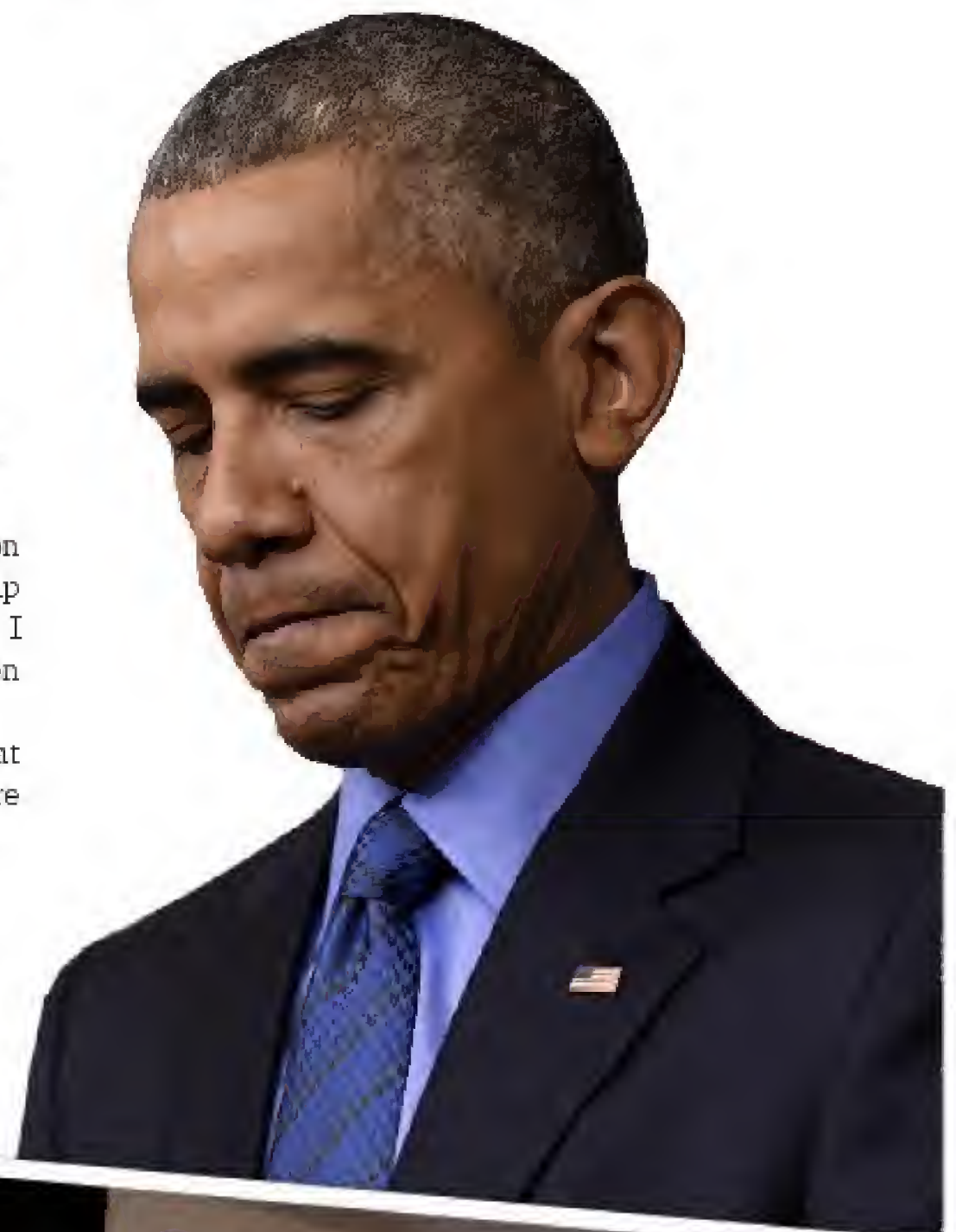
The White House released a statement saying that this is not the first time the President has used the N-word. "Truth is he uses the term about a dozen times in Dreams from my Father," White House Deputy Press Secretary Eric Schultz said.

Obama echoed comments in the immediate aftermath of last week's shooting, saying he's had to make speeches about a "devastating loss" too often.

"It's not enough just to feel bad. There are actions that could be taken to make events like this less likely. One of those actions we could take would be to enhance some basic common sense gun safety laws," Obama said. Obama lamented Congress's lack of action on gun control and said "Unfortunately, the grip of the NRA on Congress is extremely strong. I don't foresee any legislative action being taken in this Congress."

Obama also weighed in on a critical case that is currently before the Supreme Court, where opponents of the Affordable Care Act are asking whether the law authorizes tax subsidies for 6.4 million Americans who have already received help to afford health coverage.

"First of all I'm confident we'll win, because the law is clearly on our side," Obama said. He added that if the nation's highest court were to rule in favor of the ACA's opponents, "five to six million people could lose their healthcare."



Apple Music CHANGES POLICY after Taylor Swift stand

APPLE Music has reversed its payment policy, a day after the singer Taylor Swift said she was refusing to allow the company to stream her album 1989.

In an open letter to Apple, Swift said she was withholding the record as she was unhappy with the three-month free trial offered to subscribers.

Now Apple says it will pay artists for music streamed during trial periods. "We hear you @taylorswift13 and indie artists. Love, Apple," tweeted executive Eddy @Cue. Swift had said the plan was "unfair", arguing Apple had the money to cover the cost.

"I find it to be shocking, disappointing, and completely unlike this historically progressive and generous company," the 25-year-old said, describing Apple as one of her "best partners in selling music".

"Three months is a long time to go unpaid, and it is unfair to ask anyone to work for nothing.

"We don't ask you for free iPhones. Please don't ask us to provide you with our music for no compensation."

Apple Music launches on 30 June. It will cost \$9.99 (£6.30) per month in the US for one person or \$14.99 for families.

After hearing news of the company's decision on Sunday They listened to us."night Swift tweeted: "I

am elated and relieved. Thank you for your words of support today.

Mr Cue said he did not know if the Shake It Off singer would now make her album available on Apple Music - but he praised her for taking a stand.

"When I woke up this morning and I saw Taylor's note that she had written, it really solidified that we needed to make a change," he told Associated Press.

The music industry has generally supported the company bringing its vast music library to paid streaming, and the firm said it would pay 73% of the music subscription revenue to music owners.

Speaking to Billboard magazine Cue said they had already been hearing "a lot of concern from indie artists about not getting paid during the three-month trial period" before Swift spoke out. But he said "we never looked at it as not paying them".

"We had originally negotiated these deals based on paying them a higher royalty rate on an ongoing basis to compensate for this brief time", he said.

They will now pay artists during the trial period and "also keep the royalty rate at the higher rate."

He said he spoke to Swift himself to let her know they were making the changes and "she was thrilled and

very thankful".

It is not the first time Swift has spoken out against streaming music - she pulled her entire catalogue from Spotify last November and had refused to offer 1989 on streaming services, saying the business had "shrunk the numbers of paid album sales drastically". She explained to Yahoo Music why she pulled her music from Spotify: "I'm not willing to contribute my life's work to an experiment that I don't feel fairly compensates the writers, producers, artists, and creators of this music."

If you find a Swift song now on Spotify it will only be from a compilation album.

1989 went on to become one of the biggest-selling albums of 2014 and has sold more than 4.9 million copies in the US alone.

Last week, UK-based independent record label Beggars echoed Swift's comments, saying it struggled "to see why rights owners and artists should bear this aspect of Apple's customer acquisition costs".

It said it did not have an agreement with Apple that would allow it to participate in the new service but hoped the "obstacles to agreement can be removed" in the coming days.



Petra KVITOVA

**pulls out of Wimbledon
warm-up with illness**



DEFENDING Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitová has pulled out of the Aegon International with illness.

The 25-year-old Czech was due to start her Wimbledon preparations in the second round at Eastbourne on Tuesday. But the number one seed will now go to the All England Club without playing any competitive grass-court tennis, having not played since her fourth-round exit in the French Open.

«I have a sore throat. I have to stay in bed, drink tea and rest,» she said. «I didn't feel well when I came here last Thursday, I had to make this decision.

«I hope to be fine for Wimbledon. I'll stay here in Eastbourne and then slowly move to London.» Kvitová, ranked second in the world, also won the Wimbledon title in 2011 and has seven days to recover in time to defend her title at the competition, which begins on Monday, 29 June.

She had been expected to play doubles at Eastbourne with number two seed Caroline Wozniacki.

